AN EPISTLE IN THE LOVE of GOD TO FRIENDS,

With a Little Chiefly to their Tender CHILDREN.

To which is added a few Lines to ſuch that may be farther grown IN THE

TRUTH.

The Lord gave the Word; great was the Company of thoſe that Publiſhed it. Pſal. 68. 11.

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TO THE READER.

Dear Friends,

ACcording to the Gentle and Friendly Dealings of the Lord to my Soul, whose Love I feel hath a Constraining Vertue in it; therefore, as he hath set before all Men Good and Evil, my Desires are, That all may make the better Choice; and as there is

Diverſity of Gifts and Operation by one and the ſame Spirit: Likewiſe, I do believe, there is a ſervice for all the Gifts of God, as they are improved to the Honour of the Giver, who is God over all in his unchangeable Power, bleſſed for ever.

AN

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AN EPISTLE

In the Love of *GOD*, to FRIENDS, *&c.*

Dear Friends,

IN that True and Univerſal Love which God hath begotten in me, this is with me to ſend amongſt you, feeling the Spring of Life to be opened from an Inward ſence of the Word of God's Immortal, Divine, and Quickening Power; by which Power and Word, all things were made and created in the Beginning; by which, and taking heed thereto, the Lord hath made many of you Living Witneſſes of that ſaying, and it is fulfilling in this our Day. *Behold*, ſaith the Lord,

I Create a new Heaven and a new Earth, wherein dwells Righteouſneſs; for which the Lord is only, and alone Worthy of all Praiſe, and to him be it given, from all you who are made living Partakers of this his Everlaſting Kindneſs. And Friends, we have all good cauſe to wait for the Lord's Teaching, who Teacheth his People to Profit, as he hath done many that are gone before, in thoſe things that belong to their everlaſting Well-being, through believing in Chriſt Jeſus, who is the Wiſdom of God, and the Power of God, by which many know, as ſure as ever it was ſpoken, that Faith is the Gift of God, begotten through the Divine Influences of his Bleſſed Spirit; a meaſure of which is given to every Man to profit withal, and there is not another Way or Name given under Heaven, by which Loſt Man can be ſaved and brought back again out of the Fall, to God his Maker and Creator, but by the Name and Power of Jeſus: You know, dear Friends, who have felt his Reſtoring Arm to be at work in you, by which you

you can teſtifie it is that alone which brings Salvation; and therefore this is no new thing to you, who alſo know God's Arm is not ſhortened, neither is his Word or Power leſſened; but through the ſame ſaving Word of Power, you with me, and I with you, may admire the Virtue that is through it manifeſt in this our Day, by which the Blind Eye hath been opened, the Deaf Ear unſtopp'd, the Lame not only to walk, but leap as an Hart, through the ſafe Conducting Power that is in it: and therefore, Friends, let us all go Hand in Hand together, in this the Good Old Way, which is alſo livingly renew'd in you that walk in it day after day; in the ſence of which let our Spirits bleſs the Lord together, and all go forward towards the Lord's Holy Mountain, for you know Holineſs becomes his Houſe for ever, you to whom the Goſpel Sun hath ſo clearly ſhined, which will yet more and more, by which many will yet ſee the Glory that is in it, and flock to the ariſing of it, for the Lord hath not left himſelf with-

out Witneſſes, having brought many to a right Underſtanding of the Bleſſed way to the Kingdom of Heaven, which many are yet ſeeking, which is Chriſt Jeſus, who gave himſelf a Ranſom for Mankind, that he might redeem them from all Iniquity; and that is the Univerſal Love of God for all to Receive, who hath ſent his Son to bleſs us, in turning every Man from the Evil of their ways; for many we know have been turned to God, and made partakers of that great Bleſſing, and I would to God that there were many more in this our Nation brought out of the Fall of the firſt *Adam*, through believing in Chriſt Jeſus the ſecond *Adam*, the Lord from Heaven, who is a quickening Spirit, who ſaid, *I am the Reſurrection and the Life, he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live*; and bleſſed be the Lord, Dear Friends, he hath made you living Witneſſes of many of thoſe Bleſſed Sayings Recorded in the Scriptures of Truth, by the Inſpiration of the ſame Holy Spirit that gave them forth; and I know

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it is your desires with mine, that all who have believed in the Spiritual Appearance of Christ, may so wait upon him, as to know the end of his coming in them, that thereby they may come to know the only true God and Jesus Christ; whom to know, is Life Eternal; which Life Men cannot enjoy, while they are dead in Trespasses and Sin, whatever they may talk of, read or hear of God and Christ, or the Scriptures, which they call their Rule: But how few walk according to the Directions thereof, which directs them to him who saves his People from their Sins; You also know who are the saved of the Lord, who is of Purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity with Pleasure; therefore, I think it great pity, that any that come amongst us, should give or take liberty to such Looseness and Evils that others were Strangers to, before they knew the precious Truth, as it is now made manifest. Therefore, to such this Word of Counsel is in my Heart, that they may now consider, that the Lord is calling all Men every

where

where to Repentance; and that it is alſo Cauſe of Grief to all thoſe tender Hearts, who receive the Truth in Love, and for the Purity of it, and love the Truth, becauſe of the true Edification that is in it; and it is you, my Friends, I know, that feel the Love of God reaching in you, to encourage others to love him and that which is good; and embrace the Teſtimony of Truth in their own Hearts, although ſome in our Day have turned their backs upon the Truth, and embrace thoſe things which once they were led out of by it; and others, through an evil ſurmiſing, and prejudicial Spirit, put a ſlight eſteem and value upon it: But bleſſed be the Lord, I am throughly ſatisfied there are many that retain their firſt love to it, and abide in that Charity which becomes all that have the true Knowledge of it; and you, my Friends, feel the Sweetneſs and Comfort of the Truth: And you, I know, cannot but love all that truly love the appearance of Chriſt Jeſus, although his Viſage is more marr'd than any Man's, in and amongſt

amongſt too too many: But you, Friends, who have ſeen him, as he is the expreſs Image of his Father's Subſtance, to you he is moſt Lovely; and therefore, feeling the Comforts of God's Holy Spirit with me, I am willing to ſend theſe Lines amongſt you, that ſo together, we may be made Living Partakers of the Renowned Mercies of our God, who doth not forget to be gracious, to his Children and People, who wait and think upon his Name, whoſe Name is above every Name, to which every Knee muſt bow, and confeſs to the Name of Jeſus, who is *Emanuel*, God with us; and by that meaſure of his Bleſſed Spirit given to us, he is in us, by which meaſure, many have, and all may know a Profiting towards God, and thoſe things that belong to their Everlaſting Peace which according to the Apoſtles Ehortation, let us all endeavour to keep with all Men. But Dear Friends, let there be a moviance and particular concern for it, and the preſervation of it, in and amongſt all the Called and Gathered by the

Lord

Lord, to the Teſtimony of his Spiritual Appearance in us; and therefore, Dear Friends, in the Love of God, I beſeech you all dwell, that we may be a People preſerved from all thoſe hurtful things, wrong and unruly Spirits, that we ſee take ſo much place in ſome, but bleſſed be the Lord, there is an Eye open that ſees the Foundation of God ſtands ſure for ever, and the Lord knows who are his People, and the Sheep of his Paſture; them he hath and will feed, and they ſhall drink of the Streams of *Shilo's* Brooks that run ſoftly, and will refreſh all the truly thirſty Souls, for them the Lord hath and will fill; and it is for your ſakes, dear Friends, that the Lord opens the Sluces of his Love, that you may all drink of the Streams of Living Water, and be revived this day in him, and comforted in one another; for he will fill your Hearts with the Treaſure that is Heavenly, and never fades away, nor wears; and as you all walk in the Truth, and continue in that Love, which was begotten by the Truth,

in which Love I know you all can do no leſs, than put a right eſteem and value upon the continued Goodneſs and Mercies of the Lord, in which Love of God, none can hurt, wrong, or evilly entreat one another; and this Love will bring and keep all things in good order amongſt the Called, Faithful and Choſen People of the Lord, in this preſent Age and Day: Therefore, dear Friends, it is my hearty deſire to the Lord, that all may feel this Love of God, to draw their Hearts more and more to love him, and that Grace and Truth that comes by Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo all may draw water out of the Well of Salvation, and drink abundantly of the River of God's Pleaſure, which proceeds from under the Throne of our God, and the Lamb for ever.

A few Lines Chiefly to the Tender Children of FRIENDS.

TEnder Friends, There is a little with me in the Love of God to you, ſome of which may be better qualified, and more ready to receive that which is Good, than others are: But Tender Friends, for want of a a true Regard and Conſideration of the Love of God, ſome rather give way to gratifie a vain Mind, which is ready and apt to be taken with Pride, and the vain Glory of this fading World, which doth greatly Eclipſe that Good in your firſt Nature, that otherwiſe would appear more Beautiful, and it doth alſo hinder the Good Seed that is ſown in your Hearts from taking Root downward, by which it ſhould bring forth Fruit upward to the Praiſe of the Lord, who is the Good Husbandman; and therefore tender Friends all, conſider the Love of God that is ſhed abroad in many Hearts, and yet runs towards you,

you, who are the Younger Generation, for that end that you may all have a true Regard to the Lord, and to your Tender Parents, whoſe Tender Love and Care may be over you for good; for I have many times thought it great pity, that any Children ſhould evilly treat their Parents for their Tender Love and Care towards them, but ſince it is ſo, as we have ſometimes ſeen, Parents may the better receive every good Caution, and in the Authority of Truth, keep Children in Subjection, and according to the Apoſtles Exhortation, Children will have cauſe to take it well, they are learned when they are young to obey their Parents in the Lord, for this, ſaith he, is right; and therefore, Tender Children, incline your Hearts to love the Lord, his Way and Truth, and obey your Parents, that live therein; for although it hath happened ill with ſome through their Diſobedience, yet there is good cauſe to hope well for many others of you, who may be a ſucceeding Generation of the Faithful, many of which

which are gathered to their everlaſting reſt; and hoping well for many, we cannot but deſire well for all our Children, that they may be Wiſe, and learn the Fear of the Lord, which will be a Fountain of Life to preſerve them from the Snares of Death, and keep them from thoſe many ſorts of Evils, and hurtful things, which otherwiſe may poſſibly bring ſuch an Evil Day upon them, as to diſhonour God, grieve their Tender Parents, and diſappoint themſelves of true Happineſs here and hereafter. Therefore it is again with me to ſay, Hear and fear the Great God, for there is need of renewing this Exhortation amongſt ſome Children and young People that come amongſt us: And again, The fear of the Lord was ſaid to be the beginning of true Wiſdom; and I know many, for your encouragement, can confirm the Teſtimony, that to depart from Evil, will give, or bring you to a good Underſtanding what will Become, Adorn, or Accompliſh you, as Men and Women fearing God: And truly, Friends,

all

all other will ſtand you in little or no ſtead, as you come to love and embrace the Plain and Modeſt way of Truth, and dwell therein. And again, let me tell you, I know ſome were Educated in many things commendable amongſt other Sober People; yet when it pleaſed the Lord to open their Eyes to behold the Light of this glorious day that is ſprung from on high, and hath viſited us, to give the Light of the Knowledge of God in the face of his Son Chriſt Jeſus, we then ſaw that many of thoſe things were not conſiſtent with the Truth, as it is now made manifeſt; therefore I know ſome were not only willing to caſt off, forſake, and deny, but deſirous to be ſtript of all, that they might be Cloathed with the Heavenly Robe of Righteouſneſs, and wear thoſe Garments that they ſo often heard recommended by the Servants of the Lord, which you may all wear, as you take heed to the Sanctifying Word of Life in your own Hearts, which the Apoſtle recommends as that moſt ſure Word of Prophecy, *which*, ſays he, *You will all do*

well to take heed unto, as unto a Light that ſhines in a dark place, till the day dawn, and Day-Star ariſe in your Hearts, which bleſſed be the Lord, many in our day have known, whoſe deſires are, that you may alſo come to behold the Glory of the Son of Righteouſneſs to ſhine in and through you, that thereby others may be invited to come and taſte and ſee how good the Lord is; and therefore Dear Children, all haſten from off the Borders of Rebellion, and be faithful to God, that you may be Partakers of his everlaſting Bleſſing, and learn Submiſſion with humble and due reſpects to God, and your tender Parents, in which mind you will all be ready to return Thankſgiving to the Lord and them for his Love, their Care, and wholſome Advice to you, for your true and everlaſting well-being.

Then you the Golden Age may ſee,
As in the Truth you grow;
And in the Love and Fear of God,
His Secrets you may know.

There-

Therefore, dear Children, ſeek the Lord,
And love his Holy Truth;
Be Meek, be Sober, and be Grave,
This will become the Youth.
And then the Lord will Riches give,
Durable you ſhall ſee;
Heavenly Treaſure from above
To you will opened be.
As you do prize the chiefeſt good,
And from all bad refrain;
And ſhun all evil to do good,
God's Favour you'll obtain.
In order unto which ſeek God,
With broken Hearts this day,
And love his Light and Truth, and walk
Undefiled in the way.
That ſo his wrath may not break forth,
But he may ſtay his Hand,
And in the room of Judgments may
Send Bleſſings on our Land.
So in true Love unto you all,
I bid you all farewel;
And recommend you to God's Fear;
Where you and I ſhould dwell.
That we may be preſerved
From all preſumptuous things,
And in true Love to God ſubmit,
On Earth to Heavenly things.

That all may find the peace,
Which in true Love doth flow;
For God is Love, and no other
Can the Devil overthrow.
And therefore Children all,
Grow in Love and good Will,
That your Age may Excell
God's Royal Law fulfil.

These following Lines are to you, my tender Friends, who may be counted of the Yonger Generation that are already sensible of the Love of God, manifest thro' the appearance of the Son of his Love, the Hope of that Glory which is revealed in you. Dear Friends, the Bowels of true Love yearns towards you with many desires to the Lord, that you may all be preserved near to him, by a daily waiting upon him, that so your strength may be more and more renewed in him, for the Enemy of all Righteousness will endeavour by one means or other to draw your Minds from the true and safe Center, where you may be preserved Close and Inward with the Lord, for he hath many ways to deceive:

deceive: Sometimes, he may be endeavouring to hurry your Minds, and lead you too faſt; and other times he may be ſeeking to hinder you from walking in the ſtrait and narrow way which leads to Life Eternal; therefore, dear Friends, as my experience in that and other things, let me tell you, there is no ſafety in any ſtate that I have yet ſeen, but as the Watch is kept, diligently waiting upon the Lord, by which you may come more and more to know his Mind and Will, and then all be careful how you perform it, and in the Love of God, all be careful, that you go not from that meaſure of his Spirit given you to profit withal: But all wait more and more to be taught by it, that more advantage by the Grace of God, you may all receive to your Immortal Souls, as you continue in the ſelf-denying way, in taking up the Croſs to all thoſe things that may preſent, or are of a contrary nature to the plain and moderate way that Truth leads in, for the Lord is the ſame as ever he

was,

was, and all that come to him, muſt come by the ſame Door of entrance, into the Sheep fold of Eternal Reſt; for there is no other way, but by Chriſt Jeſus, whoſe Appearance is ſtill the ſame as ever, although thro' the Faithful Sufferings of many Faithful Friends, there was gained Outward Liberty; which bleſſed be the Lord, is yet continued amongſt us, by which the way is made more eaſie: Yet my Friends, there is the ſame grand Enemy of Truths Proſperity to encounter withal; but bleſſed be the Lord, Friends, you do know your Weapons are not Carnal, but Spiritual and Mighty through God, and therefore keep on your Spiritual Armor, that you may be able to quench all the Fiery Darts of the Wicked One, which may be many, as you walk in your Spiritual Travel the ſame way that the Lord hath led and brought many out of Spiritual *Ægypt's* Darkneſs, and through the Waters, who hath alſo fed them in the Wilderneſs, by whoſe Care and Kindneſs, bleſſed be his Name, many have

been

been and are, as the good Spy, ready to give Teſtimony of the good Land that flows with Milk and Heavenly Divine Sweetneſs, which is the Spiritual Honey, by which the Spiritual Man is nouriſhed, and good Will daily increaſed, which through the Love of God, will more and more be manifeſted; therefore, Friends, be all incouraged to go on in the Light of the Lord, where you may ſee the Enemy in all his approaching, that you may be ſafely conducted in that way that the Lord would have all his People to walk in, that by walking in Chriſt the way, you that are of the Younger Generation may partake of God's everlaſting Bleſſing, which he promiſed to *Abraham* his Servant, when he ſaid, *In bleſſing I will bleſs thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy ſeed*: For the fulfilling of which, Dear Friends, let us all wait upon the Lord, that thereby we may receive Grace for Grace from him; that in the receiving of his Grace and Mercy, our Hearts may be more and more bowed, and Spirits broken, that

that a Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving may be offered unto him of his own preparing, who is worthy of all Praiſe, Glory and Honour, to whom be it given at this time, henceforth, and for ever, ſaith my Soul, your Friend, Siſter, and Fellow Traveller in Spirit for *Sion*'s Proſperity.

A. F.

THE END